



# New Freedom Initiative Progress Report Released

President Bush announced the New Freedom Initiative on February 1, 2001, as part of a nationwide effort to remove barriers to community living for people with disabilities. Today, there are more than 54 million Americans living with a disability, representing a full 20 percent of the U.S. population. Almost half of these individuals have a severe disability affecting their ability to see, hear, walk or perform other basic functions of life.

The New Freedom Initiative is a comprehensive plan that represents an important step in working to ensure that all Americans have the opportunity to learn and develop skills, engage in productive work, make choices about their daily lives and participate fully in community life. The Initiative's goals are to:

- Increase access to assistive and universally designed technologies
- Expand educational opportunities
- Promote homeownership
- Integrate Americans with disabilities into the workforce
- Expand transportation options
- Promote full access to community life

In May 2002, President Bush released a progress report documenting accomplishments since the New Freedom Initiative was launched in February 2001. The report also outlines next steps that the administration will take toward meeting the New Freedom goals.

## Innovative Transportation Solutions

Transportation is an integral part of the New Freedom Initiative. New Freedom Initiative policies seek to test new transportation ideas and develop partnerships to increase access to alternate means of transportation. Transportation accomplishments outlined in the progress report include:

- The Department of Transportation, through its Job Access and Reverse Commute Program, has funded over 200 state and local grantees in 44 states to provide new employment transportation services for low-income persons, including persons with disabilities. This competitive grants program funds additional transportation services to jobs and job training sites and addresses unmet needs of persons with disabilities. Past recipients of these funds in Louisiana include the Capital Transportation

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## Public Transportation Staff

225-274-4302

[www.dotd.state.la.us](http://www.dotd.state.la.us)

**Carol Cranshaw**

Administrator

[ccransha@dotd.state.la.us](mailto:ccransha@dotd.state.la.us)

**Donna Lavigne**

Assistant Administrator

[dlavigne@dotd.state.la.us](mailto:dlavigne@dotd.state.la.us)

**Harold Beck**

Elderly & Disabled Program

Manager

[hbeck@dotd.state.la.us](mailto:hbeck@dotd.state.la.us)

**Emily Callender - Efferson**

Urban Program Manager

[ecallend@dotd.state.la.us](mailto:ecallend@dotd.state.la.us)

**Ann Ladner**

Job Access Reverse Commute

Program Manager

[aladner@dotd.state.la.us](mailto:aladner@dotd.state.la.us)

**Darlene St. Romain**

Rural Public Transit Program

Manager

[dstromai@dotd.state.la.us](mailto:dstromai@dotd.state.la.us)

**Wanda Walker**

Training & Technical

Assistance Program

Manager

[wwalker@dotd.state.la.us](mailto:wwalker@dotd.state.la.us)

**Michelle Horne**

Rural Public Transit Program

Assistant Manager

[mhorne@dotd.state.la.us](mailto:mhorne@dotd.state.la.us)

**Diana Ickes**

Elderly & Disabled Program

Assistant Manager

[dickes@dotd.state.la.us](mailto:dickes@dotd.state.la.us)

**Kay Ryall**

Assistant Program Specialist

[kryall@dotd.state.la.us](mailto:kryall@dotd.state.la.us)

**Cherie Doyle**

Office Coordinator

[cdoyle@dotd.state.la.us](mailto:cdoyle@dotd.state.la.us)

# Notes from the Top

Hello again! After a short break we are back in action with our newsletter. There are many exciting things happening in transit and we know that you will all want to be a part of future events.

A good place to get started is the 14th Annual Louisiana Public Transportation Conference at the Hilton Hotel in Lafayette on September 30th through October 2nd. If you haven't yet registered, be sure and get those forms in soon!

We are moving forward with our state-wide coordination efforts. The Inter-agency Transportation Coordination Committee (IATCC) has diligently worked to cultivate understanding and remove barriers that have hindered coordination between state agencies in the past. We will continue to work toward our coordination goals and welcome your suggestions on how to best address your needs. Our best opportunity to reach public transportation goals, as directed in the Governor's Vision 2020 Plan, is to advance and expand transit systems throughout the state. We must improve the mobility for Louisiana's citizens by providing full or partial coverage in every parish.



Our consultant, Alliance Transportation Group, is currently working on a revision to the rural transportation providers marketing manual. To present the material, we have tentatively scheduled two one-day workshops in November, one in North Louisiana and one in South Louisiana. As the dates are finalized, we will send out notification. We look forward to providing you with a useful addition to your transit library.

Finally, we would like to encourage you to send topics or articles for future newsletter editions to Wanda Walker. If you would like to highlight your transit system or recognize one of your

staff members, we will provide a forum to do so. Sharing of innovative ideas, techniques and uplifting stories about your system, a special client, a state agency, local government official or a transit friendly legislator are most welcome. We want the transit newsletter to be an informative publication that addresses issues of interest to you and others.

Carol Cranshaw  
Public Transportation  
Administrator  
Louisiana Department of  
Transportation and Development

# Louisiana Annual Public Transportation Conference

The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development and the Louisiana Public Transit Association will hold its annual Public Transportation Conference in Lafayette, Louisiana from September 30 through October 2 at the Hilton Lafayette at 1521 West Pinhook Road. For reservations call the Hilton at 337-235-6111.

The conference will include sessions on:

- Job Access/Reverse Commute
- Elderly/Disabled Application Review
- Rural Transit Application Review
- Safety & Security

- USDA sponsored programs
- Marketing
- Coordination
- Vendor panel
- Insurance Issues
- Funding Issues

Conference registration is \$170 for LPTA members and \$195 for non-members.

For additional information, contact Wanda Walker, Conference Coordinator, at 225-274-4302. For registration information contact Kay Ryall at 225-274-4302.

## New Freedom Initiative Continued from page 1

Corporation (award of \$500,000 in 2000); City of Jefferson (\$250,000 in 2000); Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (\$1 million in 2000); and Louisiana Ways to Work (\$750,000 in 2002).

- The Department of Transportation created an interagency working group to coordinate the numerous Federal programs that fund transportation for persons with disabilities. The working group has produced a resource guide identifying Federal programs that fund transportation for persons with disabilities. The guide also includes examples of best practice transportation services in getting persons with disabilities to work and employment support services that local officials can use in city planning. The document is available on the internet at [www.projectaction.org/fundguide/fundguide.htm](http://www.projectaction.org/fundguide/fundguide.htm), or by contacting Project ACTION at 1-800-659-6428.

- In March 2002, the Federal Transit Administration and Project Action held a National Dialogue on Accessible Transportation to foster communication between the transit industry and the disability community in identifying accessibility issues and creative, effective solutions.

## Next Steps

The progress report notes that the President will seek authorization to establish the Department of Transportation's New Freedom Initiative program and request \$145 million in FY 2003 for a competitive grants program to provide additional transportation services for job access and a pilot program to demonstrate innovative solutions for transportation problems still faced by persons with disabilities. The President's FY 2003 budget expands the funding for the Job Access and Reverse Commute program to the full authorization level of \$150 million, an increase of \$50 million since the President took office. This program includes job-related transportation services for people with disabilities.

**15<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL  
LOUISIANA PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION CONFERENCE 2002**

Lafayette, Louisiana  
September 30 - October 2, 2002

**CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM**

*Please complete one form per person. You may photocopy for additional attendees. Please type or print your information clearly. Phone registration will not be accepted without faxed registration form for verification.*

**EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION :**

LPTA Members .....\$150.00

Non-Members.....\$175.00

**REGISTRATION AFTER 9/9/02**

LPTA Members.....\$170.00

Non-Members .....\$195.00

?

**No refunds after September 20, 2002**

REGISTRANT INFORMATION	GUEST TICKETS
Please indicate which of the following function you plan to attend:	Check all that apply:
? Monday Reception (9/30/02, 6:00pm-8:00pm)	? Monday Reception (9/30/02, 6:00pm-8:00pm).....\$25.00
? Tuesday Luncheon (10/1/02, 11:30am-1:00pm)	? Tuesday Luncheon (10/1/02, 11:30am-1:00pm).....\$28.00
? Tuesday Dinner/Special Event (10/1/02, 5:30pm-9:00)	? Tuesday Dinner/Special Event (10/1/02, 5:30pm-9:00)...\$35.00
? Wednesday Award Luncheon (10/2/02, noon-1:15pm)	? Wednesday Award Luncheon (10/2/02, noon-1:15pm)....\$25.00
? <b>Conference Registration Includes:</b> Admission to all sessions, conference materials, two lunches, reception, dinner/special event and breaks	<b>AMOUNT DUE FOR GUEST TICKETS</b> \$_____

**Make Check Payable To: LPTA**

**Mail Check and Registration Form(s)\* To:**

LADOTD, Public Transportation Section  
P.O. Box 94245, Airport  
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9245

**Please indicate the following:**

? Check enclosed  
? Check will follow in mail

\*You may fax registration forms to (225) 274-4314. For more information contact Kay Ryall @ (225) 274-4302.

<b>BADGE INFORMATION</b>		
<b>Note: Please complete registrant badge information carefully to avoid incomplete/incorrect information.</b>		
Name:	Title:	
Agency/Company:	Address:	
City, State, Zip:		
Telephone Number:	Fax:	E-mail Address:
Spouse/Guest (if attending)		
<b>Please indicate any special accommodations and/or needs.</b>		

**HOTEL INFORMATION**

The conference will be held at the Hilton Lafayette, 1521 West Pinhook Road, Lafayette, Louisiana 70505. A block of sleeping rooms at a special conference rate of \$65.00 per night plus tax has been set aside on a first-come-first-serve basis only until Monday, September 9, 2002. Reservations should be made directly with the Hilton Lafayette by calling (337) 235-6111. Be sure to ask for the "Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development" special conference rate. After September 9 room reservations will be on a space and rate available basis only.

\*other hotels in the area include: Best Western Hotel, 1801 W. Pinhook Rd, (337) 233-8120    Travelodge Hotel, 1101 W. Pinhook Road, (337) 234-7402

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# Reaping the Benefits of LPTA



## Benefits of LPTA for Rural and Specialized Systems

Additional vehicle  
purchases

Lower registration  
fees for state  
conference

Scholarships for  
conferences and  
workshops

Legislative Alerts and  
Updates

A united voice for  
transit in Louisiana at  
state and federal level



## What is LPTA?

Do you know who the Louisiana Public Transit Association (LPTA) really is and what it does for you? LPTA is your voice and advocate for transit in the State of Louisiana. LPTA membership is comprised of transit providers, state and local governments, transit consultants, transit suppliers, and transit advocates. LPTA assists transit operators by providing a strong, independent voice for enhanced transit service in Louisiana. LPTA acts as an advocate on your behalf at the Capitol, represents your interests before the Legislature, and endorses equitable funding. LPTA links the transit communities in Louisiana together as one voice in Washington D.C.

## Benefits of LPTA

All transit providers in Louisiana reap the benefits of LPTA membership either directly or indirectly. Urban transit systems directly receive funds attained through the efforts of LPTA. However, because rural and specialized systems do not directly receive funds, these providers may not recognize how LPTA benefits them.

Rural and specialized transit providers receive the most significant benefit from LPTA in the form of new vehicles. DOTD uses the additional funds generated by LPTA to purchase new and replacement vehicles for rural and specialized providers. Without these funds, the level of vehicle purchases would be significantly lower. In the past five years, the additional funding from LPTA totaled more than \$3 million, which allowed DOTD to purchase 102 more vehicles for the rural and specialized systems. Without LPTA, the purchase of those vehicles would not have been possible, and many systems would not have been able to replace worn-out vehicles or expand their service with new vehicles.

LPTA contributes up to \$5,000 every year to help defray the cost of the annual transit conference. This contribution helps DOTD to cover the cost of qualified trainers and speakers and keeps registration fees lower. Better speakers results in better training, and lower registration fees helps the conference be more affordable to rural and specialized systems with limited resources.

Without the help of LPTA, scholar-



*Additional funds generated by LPTA translate into vehicle purchased by the DOTD for rural and specialized systems. The DOTD was able to purchase 102 additional vehicles over the past five years as a result of LPTA's efforts.*

ships to ALL conferences and workshops would be reduced. These scholarships expand the opportunity for more transit systems to participate in conferences and workshops. Many rural and specialized transit providers would not be able to participate in these valuable training and networking opportunities without scholarship monies.

LPTA keeps its members informed with up-to-date information on legislation affecting transit. During the Legislative Session these alerts are updated weekly, and sometimes on a daily basis. Keeping abreast of legislative decisions that could affect funding and operations is critical to the management of transit systems of all sizes.

## **Future of LPTA**

Continued benefits resulting from LPTA's work depends on you. The most successful state transit associations have a strong united leadership, and your membership in LPTA will contribute to a strong united leadership for transit in Louisiana. Your membership in and support of LPTA will help maintain your existing levels of service, as well as ensure that Louisiana transit operators have a strong presence in the State and Federal Legislatures.

Become a member of LPTA today by calling 225-274-4302 or fill out and return the LPTA membership form included in this newsletter.

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**  
**LOUISIANA PUBLIC TRANSIT ASSOCIATION**

APPLICANT: Please complete the following. The information is required to accurately determine the amount of dues to be invoiced. Upon completion, please mail to:

**LOUISIANA PUBLIC TRANSIT ASSOCIATION**  
**c/o LA DOTD**  
**P. O. BOX 94245, Airport**  
**BATON ROUGE, LA 70804-9245**

Type of Membership:    ☐ Regular                                      ☐ Professional                                      ☐ Associate  
**(See next page for a description of types of membership.)**

\_\_\_\_\_  
System/Company Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip Code

\_\_\_\_\_  
Primary Contact/Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secondary Contact/Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Service Area/Population

\_\_\_\_\_  
FAX Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
# of Vehicles

\_\_\_\_\_  
# of Employees

\_\_\_\_\_  
# Passengers Per Year

\_\_\_\_\_  
Route(s) Mileage

\_\_\_\_\_  
Annual Operating Budget

\_\_\_\_\_  
Funding Source

(i.e. Section 5307, 5310, 5311)

Check if you are currently a member:

☐   
☐

Southwest Transit Association (SWTA)

American Public Transit Association (APTA)

Which state/federal legislators from your area would you be willing to contact on behalf of LPTA?

Senators:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Representatives:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## **MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION:**

### **TYPES OF MEMBERSHIP AND DUES:**

#### **REGULAR**

Consists of publicly funded transit providers operating or providing any form of organized urban and/or rural public transportation service within the State of Louisiana. This includes all Federal Transit Administration (FTA) fund recipients operating public transportation under the Section 9, 16, and 18 programs. Regular members are entitled to a vote and full LPTA privileges.

DUES: \$50 minimum, plus \$2.00 per transit vehicle annually

#### **PROFESSIONAL**

Persons, non-profit organizations, groups, or public agencies active in the development, promotion, or operation of urban public transportation; municipalities or authorities contemplating the operation of a transit system; and publications dealing with public transportation matters. Professional members are entitled to LPTA privileges as prescribed by the LPTA Executive Board, but are not entitled to vote.

DUES: \$75 Annually

#### **ASSOCIATE**

Vendors, consultants, manufacturers and suppliers of the public transportation industry. Associate members are entitled to LPTA privileges as prescribed by the LPTA Executive Board, but are not entitled to vote.

DUES: \$100 Annually



Spotlight on...

## Calcasieu Parish Public Transportation Success in the Making

The October 2001 grand opening of Calcasieu Parish Public Transportation was an event to remember. The system, operated by the Calcasieu Parish Office of Community Services (OCS), was the first coordinated public transportation service addressing the needs of citizens through out the Parish.



The gathering at the Grand Opening was a who's who from Calcasieu Parish with a sprinkling of state officials. Members from the Calcasieu Parish Police Jury and the Parish Administrator were on hand, looking very much like proud parents at the birth of a long awaited child. Lake Charles' Director of Planning and Economic Development Ernie Broussard was in atten-

dance. Carol Cranshaw and several of her staff members from the Louisiana DOTD Public Transportation Section; Toni Carraway, Director of the Calcasieu Council on Aging; and Monsignor DeBlanc from the Catholic Diocese were also at the ceremony.

When Sandy Mason, Executive Director, Calcasieu Parish OCS, took the podium, her eyes were moist; this was what Mason and many others had worked so hard to bring about. By the time she had thanked everyone for their help, several in the audience were crying with tears of joy.

After the speeches, the assembly was introduced to the drivers and the fleet. The drivers had come from the Calcasieu Council On Aging transportation program, and the fleet had been provided by the DOTD and the Calcasieu Council On Aging. The drivers were resplendent in their new maroon and navy Calcasieu Parish Public Transportation uniforms. The vehicles were gleaming with their new Louisiana Transit logos.

### Community Support

Establishing the coordinated rural transportation system was a group effort. The Calcasieu Parish Police Jury was the backbone of the undertaking providing financial, po-

litical and often emotional support. The DOTD Public Transportation staff provided the use of their on-call consultant, Applied Technology and Research, Co., to do the initial feasibility study. The Public Transportation Section also spent time indoctrinating Mason and her staff in the protocols and forms necessary to do business in the public transportation field. With assistance from the DOTD, the Calcasieu Council On Aging transferred all of their vehicles, drivers and their transportation manager to the coordinated transit effort being undertaken by the OCS. The City of Lake Charles planning staff and the Imperial Calcasieu Regional Planning and Development Commission staff provided support and guidance on the funding issues and pitfalls every new operator faces.

### **Calcasieu Parish Public Transportation Today**

The Calcasieu Parish system is now approaching its first birthday. During start-up, the unmet rural transportation needs in Calcasieu Parish amounted to approximately 144,000 trips per year. The system is averaging over 200 trips per day and growing rapidly.

The Calcasieu Parish OCS delivers demand-response transportation services Monday through Friday 6:00 AM

to 6:00 PM. In addition, the system has contract trips that begin at 5:45 AM and don't usually stop until around midnight.

Calcasieu Parish runs nine vehicles that carry an average of eight to 11 passengers. The Parish also has one 16 passenger vehicle and two 15 passenger vehicles. The vehicles are all being outfitted with enhanced safety essentials.

The system is funded through a variety of sources. An exclusive tax is the most recent addition to the funding sources. The Calcasieu Parish Police Jury continues to provide support. Other funding sources include the Federal Transit Administration provided through DOTD

Public Transportation Section (80 percent federal match for vehicles); Calcasieu Council on Aging, Title 19 (non-emergency medical); LA Department of Social Services; and Welfare to Work.

Mason has done a remarkable job of pulling together many diverse transportation services and funding sources under one roof. She is expecting to acquire a minimum of five more vehicles in the next two years and is taking steps to streamline and expand the operation. She and the Calcasieu Parish Police Jury can take pride in accomplishing the monumental task of developing a model coordinated rural transportation system.

## **Events Calendar**

### **APTA Annual Meeting and Expo**

**Las Vegas, Nevada**  
**September 22-25**

### **APTA Bus Equipment & Maintenance/Procurement & Materials Management Workshop**

**Las Vegas, Nevada**  
**September 25-27**

**Louisiana Annual Public Transit Conference**  
**Lafayette, Louisiana**  
**September 30 - October 2**

### **Transportation Research Board Rural and Intercity Conference**

**Huron, Ohio**  
**October 27-30**

### **LaDOTD Transit Marketing Workshops**

**Tentative dates and locations:**  
**Baton Rouge - November 13**  
**Alexandria - November 14**

**SWTA Annual Conference and Expo**  
**Albuquerque, New Mexico**  
**February 9-11, 2003**

The DOTD wants Louisiana Transitions to be an informative publication that addresses issues of interest to you and others.

Louisiana Transitions provides a forum for sharing innovative ideas, recognizing staff members, and sharing stories about individual systems, special clients, and transit-friendly government officials.

If you have ideas for topics or articles for future editions of the newsletter or would like to brag about your system's recent accomplishments, please contact Wanda Walker at 225-274-4302.

*Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development  
Public Transportation Section  
8900 Jimmy Wedell Drive  
P.O. Box 94245  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9245*